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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 012532

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DEPARTMENT FOR IO/UNP WICKBERG AND EAP/MLS BARRASSO

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [CH](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: PRC OPPOSES UNSC TAKING UP BURMA ISSUE

REF: A. STATE 88973

[1](#)B. BEIJING 11177

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission David Sedney. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

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#### SUMMARY

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[1](#)1. (C) China firmly opposes UNSC involvement in Burma and has serious concerns about the proposed U.S. resolution, MFA International Organizations Department Director General Wu Hailong told the DCM on June 15. ASEAN nations, except for Singapore, share China's opposition to the U.S. initiative, he added. Instead of getting the UNSC to use human rights as an excuse to interfere in Burma, the U.S. should recognize that U/SYG Gambari's visit and the reaching of "consensus" with him are positive signs that the Burmese regime wants to move forward. Wu urged U.S. to take China's very firm position into account, but offered "quiet" bilateral discussions. The DCM expressed disappointment with China's position, pointing out the deteriorating situation in Burma and the effects on the region. The DCM reiterated that the resolution would not call for sanctions and would not include Chapter 7 provisions. Separately, a Singapore Embassy officer told poloff that the MFA called in all of the ASEAN countries for separate meetings on this same issue. The MFA Asian Affairs Deputy Director General told our Singaporean contact that China specifically opposes resolution language that calls Burma a threat and would require periodic UNSC review and dialogue on Burma's situation. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) MFA International Organizations Department Director General Wu Hailong called in the DCM on June 15 to say China seriously opposes UNSC involvement in the Burma issue. China is disappointed that the United States is pushing the UNSC to get involved in Burma and has serious concerns with the proposed U.S. resolution. Burma's problems are its own internal affair and therefore the UNSC has no role. China does not see Burma as a threat to the region. The majority of ASEANs share this view, with only Singapore supporting the U.S. initiative. Although some countries are disappointed with the extension of Aung San Suu Kyi's detention and the United States calls her plight a human rights issue, every country has human rights problems and these should not be used as excuses for the UNSC to interfere lest it risk undermining its own authority and legality. Instead, the international community should sit down with Burma's leaders, engage in dialogue and provide assistance to Burma in a constructive manner rather than exert pressure, which could lead to the opposite of the positive change being sought, Wu claimed.

13. (C) It is necessary to look at Burma's situation in a comprehensive and objective manner and pay more attention to the possibility of positive change, Wu continued. MFA International Organization Department Deputy Division Director Yao Shaojun called the acceptance of U/SGY Gambari's visit and the reaching of "consensus" with U/SGY Gambari on many issues positive signs that the Burmese regime "wants to get certain things done." Admitting that the extension of ASSK's detention was not a move in the right direction, Yao added that it is just one issue and the overall situation is more positive. Pointing out that it has only been three weeks since U/SGY Gambari's visit to Burma, Wu said it is important for Burma to have the room and time to adjust and take action to implement the "consensus" U/SGY Gambari reached with the Burmese government.

14. (C) Wu urged the United States to take into account China's concerns as the Burmese issue affects major PRC interests in the region. The United States and China cooperate in many areas and Beijing does not want to see the two countries take opposing positions on issues. It is not in the interest of the United States or the international community for the UNSC to get involved in Burma, Wu claimed.

15. (C) China hopes this divergence of views with the United States can be solved bilaterally rather than being brought out into the public. Wu suggested quiet bilateral discussions on Burma. While calling the PRC position on this issue "very, very firm," Wu said the United States and China missions to the UN should continue to consult and asked the DCM to report the Chinese position to Washington immediately.

16. (C) The DCM expressed disappointment with China's

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position, pointing out that after 17 years it is clear that the situation in Burma is getting worse, not better. The flow of refugees to its neighbors, the trafficking of persons, the trade in narcotics and the spread of communicable diseases are all ongoing examples of how Burma threatens regional peace and security. Engagement and talk for the sake of such without real progress is counterproductive. The Burmese regime's disappointing decision to extend ASSK's detention is clearly a signal that the junta is not willing to change and move forward in a positive way. It is time for the international community to make a clear statement about the deteriorating conditions in Burma. The DCM pointed out that the resolution is not meant to place sanctions on Burma, nor would it contain Chapter VII provisions. Instead, the goal is to support UNSGY Annan's efforts to bring about positive change in Burma and to bolster U/SGY Gambari's message to the Burmese regime.

17. (C) Following the meeting, poloff confirmed with Singapore Embassy Political Officer Patrick Lim that his political counselor had been called in by MFA Asian Affairs Department Deputy Director General Zhao Jianhua on the same issue at the same time. Lim reported that the MFA called in all of the ASEAN nations separately today. During their meeting, Lim said China expressed strong concern about two points in a draft resolution that their mission in New York received. First, they are concerned about language calling Burma a threat to the peace and security in region. Second, the PRC opposes periodic UNSC review and dialogue on Burma's situation. Lim said his side responded to China's concerns that Singapore would support the U.S. proposal by saying that while Singapore's general position is unchanged, i.e. it does not see Burma as a threat to the security of the region and does not generally agree to UNSC involvement, it has not yet made a decision this specific case. (Comment: Previously, the Chinese had told us that Singapore supports the United States.)

18. (C) Lim told poloff that an "ASEAN consensus" on the U.S. proposal is unlikely because Burma clearly prefers to deal

bilaterally with its Southeast Asian neighbors and has shown disregard for ASEAN. Lim cited the poor treatment of ASEAN representative Malaysia FM Hamid during his visit in March.

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